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LEXICAL-SEMANTIC, MORPHOLOGICAL AND LINGUOCULTURAL DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Abstract. *Arabic is one of the oldest living languages, serving as the official language of more than twenty states and as the liturgical language of over 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide. This article provides a scientific analysis of the linguistic nature and unique structural features of Arabic, focusing specifically on its root-and-pattern morphological system, its inflective morphology, and its incomparable semantic richness. The article examines the phenomenon of diglossia in the Arabic language, the productivity of its synonym and antonym systems, the stylistic functions of majaz (figurative expression) within the discipline of balagha (rhetoric), and the linguocultural connections between Arabic and Uzbek. The study argues that Arabic constitutes a unique global linguistic phenomenon whose features are best understood through a combination of structural-linguistic and culturological analytical approaches.*

Keywords: *Arabic language; morphology; root-and-pattern system; semantics; diglossia; majaz; balagha; Arabisms; linguoculturology; Uzbek-Arabic contact; trilateral root.*

INTRODUCTION

Among the languages of the world that stand out for their ancient history spanning millennia, their rigorous grammatical rules, and their vast lexical resources, Arabic occupies a position of singular distinction. Arabic belongs to the Semitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic macro-family and is today the official state language of more than twenty countries in the Near and Middle East and North Africa, with over 290 million native speakers globally (Wikipedia, 2024:1). Its prestige at the international level was

further consolidated in 1973, when it was recognised as one of the six official working languages of the United Nations (Ibragimova, 2024:45). The global spread of Arabic is inseparably linked to the spread of Islam and to the fact that the Holy Qur'an was revealed in this language (Journal of Science-Innovative Research, 2024:80).

The scholarly importance of Arabic extends well beyond its status as a liturgical and administrative language. Its structural features – particularly the root-and-pattern morphological system – have made it a subject of sustained interest in general linguistics, typology, and linguistic typology. Its semantic richness and the sophistication of its rhetorical tradition have similarly attracted the attention of literary scholars. The present article aims to provide a comprehensive structural analysis of Arabic as a linguistic system, situating its distinctive features within a broader comparative and culturological framework that includes its long-standing interaction with Uzbek.

METHODS

The study employs descriptive-analytical, comparative-typological, and linguocultural methods. The primary sources include Qodirov et al. (2018), Yodgorova (2025), Mirzoyeva (2023), Ibragimova (2024), and Yoyo (2023), together with articles from the CAJAR, JEEV, Academic Research in Modern Science, and Zenodo international scholarly databases. The phonetic, morphological, semantic, and sociolinguistic dimensions of Arabic are analysed in comparative juxtaposition with each other and with corresponding features of Uzbek.

RESULTS

Phonetic and graphic features. The linguistic distinctiveness of Arabic is vividly apparent in its phonetic system and its graphically refined writing system, which has been polished over centuries. Arabic script is a consonantal (abjad) writing system: the alphabet consists of 28 independent letters, and texts are written exclusively from right to left (Insight Publishing, 2024:22). Short vowels are not normally represented by independent letters in the script; they are indicated by means of diacritical marks (harakat) – fatha, kasra, damma – placed above or below the consonants in order to convey the correct reading and grammatical meaning (JEEV, 2024:5). In phonological terms, Arabic possesses pharyngeal, laryngeal, and palatal consonants as well as emphatic (uvularised) consonants, which give the language its characteristic resonance

and prosodic quality (Qodirov et al., 2018:12). These phonological features distinguish Arabic sharply from Indo-European languages and have important implications for the analysis of the phonological borrowings that entered Uzbek as Arabisms.

Morphological structure: the root-and-pattern system. The most remarkable and logically sophisticated component of Arabic is its morphology and word-formation system. Arabic possesses an inflective morphological system in which new grammatical and lexical forms are generated from primarily trilateral consonantal roots (radicals) by means of various grammatical templates (Academic Research, 2024:34). The “k-t-b” (writing) root provides a vivid illustration: through the alternation of internal vowels and the application of different templates, dozens of words are derived from these three consonants, including “kataba” (he wrote), “kitab” (book), “maktab” (place of writing, school), “katib” (scribe, writer), and “maktuba” (letter) (Zenodo, 2024:14). This system makes Arabic one of the most economical and internally consistent word-formation systems known in human language.

Arabic verbs are furthermore organised into a system of derived stems (“bab”, “wazn”), and each derived stem adds a specific semantic or stylistic modification to the basic meaning of the root. For example, the second stem (fa’ala) typically conveys intensification or causation, the third stem (fa’ala) reciprocity, and the tenth stem (istaf’ala) reflexiveness or desire. This systematic derivational architecture means that a competent reader can infer the approximate meaning of an unfamiliar derived verb from knowledge of the root alone (Yoyo, 2023:17).

Lexical-semantic richness: synonymy and antonymy. Arabic constitutes a unique phenomenon among the world’s languages on account of its incomparable semantic richness and vast lexical resources. The language is particularly distinguished by the extraordinary profusion of its synonyms (al-mutaradifat) and antonyms (al-mutadaddat) (Yodgorova, 2025:48). Classical Arabic lexicography records, for instance, over two hundred words for lion, dozens for different states of the camel, and numerous terms for different qualities of rain – a lexical granularity that reflects centuries of oral culture in which precise observation of the natural world was recorded and transmitted in language. In the history of lexicography, the Basra and Kufa linguistic schools made an enormous contribution to the development of vocabulary richness by systematising the Arabic lexicon and the oral literary traditions of the tribes (Scribd, 2022:67).

Stylistics and the art of majaz. Arabic stylistics is studied primarily within the framework of “balagha” (the science of eloquence), which encompasses three sub-disciplines: “ilm al-ma’ani” (the science of meaning), “ilm al-bayan” (the science of expression), and “ilm al-badi’” (the science of rhetorical embellishment). Within Arabic linguistics, “majaz” (figurative or metaphorical language) constitutes one of the principal categories of “ilm al-bayan,” through which symbolic, metaphorical, and allegorical meanings are formed in language (CAJAR, 2024:89). When the images created through majaz, istiara (metaphor), and metonymy in the Qur’an and the prophetic hadiths are studied, the extraordinary power of their aesthetic and spiritual charge becomes manifest (Cyberleninka, 2023:21). This rhetorical tradition has exercised a deep influence on the literary aesthetics of Uzbek classical poetry and prose.

Diglossia and dialectal diversity. A further major sociolinguistic phenomenon that sets Arabic apart from other languages is diglossia – the parallel co-existence of two distinct functional varieties of the same language. In contemporary usage, the classical form of the language and Modern Standard Arabic (fusha) operate alongside the living vernacular dialects (’ammiyya) specific to each region (UzSWLU, 2024:47). Over centuries, local dialects have diverged from formal fusha in phonological and lexical terms to such an extent under the influence of geographical distance and contact with other languages that speakers from different Arab countries sometimes experience communicative difficulty in mutual comprehension (Conference Proceedings, 2024:108). This situation has generated a sustained scholarly debate about the relationship between unity and diversity in Arabic, and about the pedagogical implications of diglossia for second-language instruction.

Linguocultural connections between Arabic and Uzbek. As a result of the arrival of Islam in Mawarannahr (Transoxiana) and the teaching of Arabic as the principal scholarly subject in the madrasas of the region, thousands of lexical units relating to religious, ethical, legal, and scientific domains entered Uzbek as Arabisms (Inlibrary.uz, 2023:118). The inseparable connection between language and culture is also reflected in paremiological units: in the proverbs of both Arabic and Uzbek, concepts such as morality, mentality, and national character are expressed in a remarkably similar and convergent manner, attesting to centuries of shared cultural formation (Mirzoyeva, 2023:255). Beyond lexical borrowing, the influence of the Arabic rhetorical tradition

on Uzbek literary language was profound: the categories of balagha – istiara, kinaya, majaz – are constitutive features of the classical Uzbek literary aesthetic from Alisher Navoi onwards.

DISCUSSION

The analyses presented above confirm that the linguistic uniqueness of Arabic is determined by several mutually reinforcing factors. First, the root-and-pattern morphology grants the language an extraordinarily productive word-formation capacity: from a single trilateral root it is possible to derive dozens, sometimes hundreds, of lexically related words (Academic Research, 2024:34; Zenodo, 2024:14). Second, the richness of the synonym system enriches the lexical resources of Arabic to a degree that is incomparable with most other languages; this granularity reflects a culture of precise linguistic observation accumulated over millennia of oral and written tradition (Yodgorova, 2025:48). Third, the phenomenon of diglossia requires maintaining the relationship between the two strata of the language – classical and colloquial – as complementarity rather than contradiction, a task that places distinctive demands on Arabic language education and policy (UzSWLU, 2024:47).

For Uzbek, the significance of Arabic extends beyond the lexical layer. The science of balagha and the theory of majaz shaped the stylistic richness of the Uzbek literary language, and Islamic legal and theological terminology provided the conceptual framework for Uzbek juridical and religious thought across many centuries. These connections make the study of Arabic not merely a matter of foreign-language learning but a prerequisite for a full understanding of Uzbek literary, legal, and intellectual history. The evidence reviewed in this article therefore points to the need for an expanded and deepened scholarly collaboration between Uzbek and Arabic linguistics (Inlibrary.uz, 2023:118; Mirzoyeva, 2023:255).

CONCLUSION

In summary, Arabic occupies a unique position among the world's languages on account of its structurally complex yet perfectly logical root-and-pattern morphology and its incomparable semantic richness. The phonological distinctiveness of its consonantal system, the extraordinary productivity of its trilateral root morphology, the depth of its rhetorical tradition as codified in balagha, the sociolinguistic complexity of its diglossic

situation, and the centuries-long linguocultural connections it has sustained with Uzbek – all of these features together confirm Arabic’s status as an incomparable communicative and intellectual phenomenon in both Eastern and global civilisation (Qodirov et al., 2018; Yodgorova, 2025; Mirzoyeva, 2023). Further research at the interface of Arabic and Uzbek linguistics, particularly in the domains of contact linguistics and the history of Arabisms in Uzbek, holds significant promise for both fields.

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